

Activity Description: Kids experience being served and serving others.

Bible Discovery (20 minutes)

Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet (John 13:1-17)

Supplies

- Bible
- bucket of warm water
- washcloth
- towel
- wet wipes
- small resealable plastic bags
- hygiene items (see tip)

Tip

- You'll need 3-5 hygiene items per child. Ideas include bottles of water, deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, comb, tissue, plastic bandage, toothbrush, toothpaste, cereal bars.
- If this seems cost prohibitive to your ministry, ask for donations from families in your church. Many families may already have sample shampoo bottles or soaps from hotels. Alternatively, share with a local hotel what you're doing, and see if they'll donate items.

Command the Teacher

Say: **We're going to play a game of Simon Says. Only *you all* get to be "Simon," and I have to obey what you say. You'll give me commands, and I have to obey them if you say "Simon says" before your command. Keep it safe or I might disobey!**

Small-group leaders can join you in obeying kids' commands. Let kids take turns giving commands for you to obey.

Ask: • **What was it like having a teacher obey you?**

Say: **Normally, you have to obey what I say. This game was a big switch from what you're used to! That's kind of like what happened in today's Bible story.**

Wash Feet and Hands

Have all the kids remove their shoes. Carry your bucket, washcloth, and towel to a child, and dampen the washcloth. Wipe the damp washcloth on the child's feet and then dry them with the towel.

Continue doing this until you've washed about five or six kids' feet.

Ask: • **What did it feel like waiting to see if I would wash your feet?**

• **Did you want me to wash your feet or not? Explain.**

• **What was special about *me* doing this for you?**

Read John 13:3-5.

Say: **This was unusual. Jesus was the disciples' teacher—their leader. And yet here he was, doing the job of a servant! It was a gross job—people walked everywhere on dirt roads, so their feet got very dirty! But Jesus did it. Jesus shows us how to serve.**

It might've felt strange when I washed your feet. That's a lot like how some of the disciples felt. When Jesus wanted to wash Peter's feet, Peter didn't even want Jesus to do it because he thought Jesus was too important to do the job of a servant. But Jesus was showing them that it's important to serve others. Jesus shows us how to serve. Here's what he said about what he was doing.

Read John 13:12-17.

Say: Jesus shows us how to serve. He gave his disciples an example, and I gave you an example when I washed some of your feet. Now it's your turn to serve each other.

Have kids sit with their small groups. Give each child a wet wipe, and have kids take turns cleaning each other's hands. Kids may also choose to use the wet wipes to clean their group members' feet.

Talk About It

Have small groups discuss this question.

Ask: • **Well, how did it feel to serve each other?**

Say: **Serving can be difficult. It's not always something we want to do. Let's talk more about serving.**

Ask: • **Tell about when it's hard for you to serve.** Share your own example first. Then have small groups discuss amongst themselves.

Say: **It might seem like it was easy for Jesus to serve his disciples because they were his friends. But one of his disciples, Judas, had already decided to betray Jesus. He was going to help people kill Jesus! Jesus already knew that, and he washed Judas' feet anyway.**

Read John 13:11.

Ask: • **Imagine you were serving someone who you knew hated you. What do you think it felt like for Jesus to wash Judas' feet?**

Say: Jesus shows us how to serve everyone. He shows us how to serve friends. And he shows us how to serve people who aren't friendly to us.

Jesus showed us one way to serve. But washing someone's feet isn't something that's done much today.

Ask: • **What are other ways we can serve others?** To prompt conversation, encourage kids to think of what people have done for them. Allow time for small groups to discuss, and then ask a few kids to share what they came up with.

Serve Others

Say: Jesus shows us how to serve. We can serve our families, friends, and even people we don't know! Let's try one way we can serve like Jesus did.

We're going to make bags of hygiene items for homeless people. People without homes often don't have basic items like soap, shampoo, or tissues. We're going to make some bags you can take with you. The next time you see someone

with a sign asking for help, you and your parents can give that person a bag of hygiene items as an act of service.

Set out supplies, and allow time for each child to fill a resealable plastic bag with three to five hygiene items. Small-group leaders can help facilitate this.

Say: **Thanks for serving people without homes! Remember to only give these bags away with your parents around. You'll stay safe, and you can help your parents see how Jesus shows us how to serve.**